

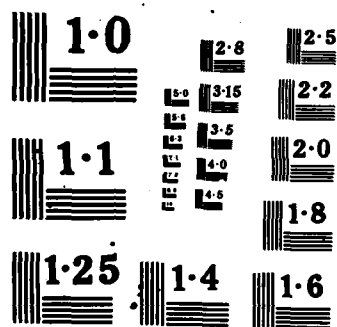
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## WARFIGHTER AND PILOT

Lieutenant Colonel John N. Abrams

An essay for publication prepared

for Professor Claude Sturgill

8 April 1986

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20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number)  This well written paper expresses concern that the training of Army officers does not produce sufficient warfighters in relationship to managers or pilots. Proper historical examples are used throughout. The author hopes to open a dialogue with others concerned with the same problem.		

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## WARFIGHTER AND PILOT

Almost certainly since the turn of the century our Army has switched from a militia and began a deliberate and evolutionary process to create a profession of arms. No longer can our nation survive without a professional Army. Our constitution is a vision of 18th Century liberalism. The requirement for a large standing armed force is still only accepted reluctantly. The Army's need for leadership is still trapped in the double entente of meeting the demands of nation building while the nation is at peace and warfighting when the nation is at war. Our historical tradition has always been the public dismantles the Army and the concept of the profession of arms after each war. Dreams of peace, however unwarranted in the face of reality are reason enough to disarm and live the life of business pacifism.<sup>2</sup> Our faith continues to be placed in the Minuteman concept of our nation in arms. ←

There has been as much debate on what a warfighter is and is not as there has been on the subject of whether the Army is building for deterrence or warfighting. Both issues are connected strategically as well as operationally. Warfighters in the eyes of today's military reformists are those members of the profession of arms who follow the eighteenth century European tradition of scholar, intellect, and gentleman. The eighteenth century warfighter according to most modern-day critics was the man who helped to build nations during periods of peace and defend them at times of war. There is almost a romantic reference to "those" great men because of their reported impact on the



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development of Western civilization. These same reformists look at the Armed Forces today and describe the officer corps as filled with milocrats, cowboys, and few warfighters.

Who are the milocrats, cowboys, and warfighters? Milocrats are those staff officers committed to serving in our burgeoning bureaucracy of the Army. Cowboys are those tough-talking, cigar-chomping, braggards of machismo who operate by instinct and reflex that prove unreliable in crisis and combat. Warfighters to the reformists are reportedly no more than the eighteenth century renaissance man. Unlike what the military reform platform of proposals suggests, there is a need periodically to take stock of the direction our officer professional development program is headed. Are we, today, while the nation is at peace raising an officer corps to supply the nation a cadre of specialists for nation building or are we grooming warfighters for warfighting?

The answer is not an easy one because during varying intervals of any nations' history there has been a need to rely on the military and standing armies as well as militia to fulfill nation building functions. In the United States this has taken the form of building dams and waterways, opening frontiers, and educating and training selected individuals whose value to nation would only be found in civilian life as a scientist, engineer, senator, clergyman, or even president. The examples of what the military has done for nation building are endless and provide one source of pride in this nation's heritage. Moreover, the tradition of nation building in today's context could well be the example of the Army's reserve units deployed to Honduras to build roads through the treacherous frontiers of Central America.

Between wars we have always created a peacetime environment from which our Army emerges in the first days of the next war unable to protect our people. Fortunately, relative isolation on this earth has heretofore provided us with time to prepare after the beginning of hostilities. The contemporary issue is that we no longer enjoy the advantage of time to ready the militia nor do we enjoy the ability to withstand catastrophic strategic failure early on in a conflict and hope to recover. We no longer enjoy strategic isolation whereby we painstakingly ready the nation and our armed forces prior to joining battle. The advent of conventional technologies coupled with a strategic reliance of forward-deployed forces increases the risk. The risk is that no longer will we be able to absorb strategically a Dunkirk to live and fight on another day. Readiness to fight on short notice is today implicit with the nation's strategic concept of forward defense.

This requirement of readiness to fight on short notice is the very reason why the nation can ill afford to rely on the ability to gear up, a deterrent value of standing armies over warfighting, able to successfully outfight and win the early battles of the next war. This is not the tradition of any army of this nation, and is one which we have dedicated ourselves to do, however untested. Within this context of readiness, the Army has historically experienced difficulty in focusing the development of essentials for warfighting during any period of peace. Remember the wholesale changes in leadership that were required after mobilization training prior to deployment or even after initial combat operations in World War II?



This lesson which has been repeated throughout the war-peace-war cycle of American history is that we must build the profession of arms and produce the leadership for warfighting requirements and not deterrence is still the source of much debate among professionals. This is a debate which generally focuses on the Army's mission. Are we to prepare for warfighting or deterrence or both? Deterrence seems not to be at great issue these days.

For example, in a recent Army-wide survey, a representative sampling of the officer corps revealed that, as a minimum, commissioned officers have little confidence in the senior officers [Lieutenant Colonel through General] fulfilling warfighting leadership requirements.<sup>2</sup> The results also indicated that the officer corps perceived that the Army has little, if any, place for those kinds of leaders who meet warfighting requirements. Perhaps our system has gone overboard on themes such as deterrence and peacekeeping to the extent that we have placed the roll of warfighters too far back in our strategic and tactical preparation. Remember, warfighters are those leaders who by their very presence and skill assure strategic confidence that victory on the battlefield and during campaigns is eminent without sacrificing large numbers of the nation's citizenry. However condemning this survey's results may appear, the United States Army Officer Corps believes that the Army must have the necessary leaders to meet warfighting requirements while the nation is at peace as well as during war. But is this just a belief that lacks operational design and accomplishment? This paper will attempt to clarify this issue.

The aforementioned survey also illustrates the traditional view that the Army is placing the wrong kinds of leaders in warfighters' positions. If this

is true, the nation will wake up when the leaders are put to the test in war. But maybe the question is really are we able in peace to determine those war-fighters who can fight the battles and win and lead the campaigns to peace as we know it today? Should we not know who they are and have a deliberate program outlined to develop their skills, rather than leave it to chance?

A review of the Army's needs from an historical perspective and application of that experience to the Army's future requirements for leadership may prove helpful. If such a study demonstrates that the Army understands the requirements for "warfighters," that reduces the question to one of not doing what we know we need to do. Or the Army's senior leadership, as defined in the above study, is not focused properly in the area of training, education, and mentoring of our subordinates. Certainly, it is this neglect of purpose, which may be real or perceived, that is the source of concern of the officer corps as expressed in this survey. It is hoped that this paper will create an intelligent exchange at the appropriate levels of leadership within the officer corps. To do so, we must, first of all, be aware of the way things have been looked at over the years.

For centuries many scholars and professional soldiers have labored over the needs of leaders within the profession of arms, and many more will attempt to resolve this dilemma in the future. Two scholars and acclaimed strategists who analyzed Napoleonic warfare and influenced twentieth century thinking in the profession of arms are Carl von Clausewitz and Baron Henri Jomini.<sup>3</sup> As the nineteenth century drew to a close military professionalism developed in major nations to some degree, with Germany leading the field. Both Clausewitz and Jomini were the two major sources of influence for Germany's prominence.

Clausewitz was the proponent of warfighting as an art based on a foundation of humanism.<sup>4</sup> This Prussian general believed that war without passion would lead to war by mathematics whereby two governments probably would gather and determine the outcome by comparing figures of military strengths. His major concern for the leader was how to deal with the ever-present element of uncertainty.<sup>5</sup> Clausewitz described uncertainty as the result of: the bombardment of the commander with reports both true and false; errors arising from fear, negligence or hastiness; the disobedience born of right or wrong interpretations of orders; the ill will of others; and the disobedience or exhaustion of troops.<sup>6</sup> War to Clausewitz was uncertainty because three-quarters of the available factors were wrapped in a fog.<sup>7</sup> If the leader's mind were to emerge unmuddled by this relentless struggle, Clausewitz believed that the leader needed two qualities. First, a leader needed an intellect that, even in the darkest hour, could sense even the faintest glimmerings of truth.<sup>8</sup> And, secondly, the leader must possess the courage to follow this faint light wherever it may lead.<sup>9</sup> Because warfare exists in this framework of uncertainty, Clausewitz cautioned against laying down fixed maxims for the conduct of war.

Yet another strategist, Jomini, who worked for Napoleon among others, was the proponent for a system of war laced with fixed maxims.<sup>10</sup> War to Jomini was a science. He believed in the existence of a small number of fundamental principles of warfare which the commander could not deviate from without the danger of defeat.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, Jomini was convinced that the application of these maxims assured success. Jomini viewed the needs of leaders in a somewhat mechanistic fashion.<sup>12</sup> One took correct theories founded upon right principles, sustained by actual events of wars, and added accurate military history to form

the true school of instruction for generals.<sup>13</sup> Jomini was convinced that such means will invariably produce generals of sufficient skill to assume command and rank just below the natural masters of the art of war.<sup>14</sup> Has the United States Army historically been committed to building the ranks deep with the tradition of warfighters when the nation is at peace?

However we prepare for future warfare, we must train properly and not repeat our mistake unlike the hasty and ill-conceived preparations for World War II and Korea when the U.S. Army sent units into battle ill prepared to meet the challenge of the enemy. In World War II, for example, complete failure occurred in the selection and training of battalion commanders in the Fourth Armored Division.<sup>15</sup> The commanding general was forced to relieve almost every reserve battalion commander and replace them with active duty majors and lieutenant colonels.<sup>16</sup>

This particular action was taken after extensive training conducted at Camp Irwin proved the battalion level leadership incapable of meeting even the minimum requirements. The Fourth Armored Division activated in April 1941 at Pine Camp, New York, but could not be deployed to Devisis, England, in January 1944, until thirty-three months later. After activation, the division began a rigorous exercise program participating in lengthy field training exercises for almost six months each in duration in Tennessee; Camp Bowie, Texas; Frieda, California; Needles, California; and returning to Camp Miles Standish, Massachusetts. This was thirty-three months of extensive training, and yet after almost two years into this training program the battalion commanders were determined unfit for meeting the challenges of combat. Eventually, the Fourth Armored Division deployed to Europe and distinguished itself as the "point" for

Lieutenant General George S. Patton's Third Army.<sup>17</sup> Will we have this much time to prepare in the future?

The 28th Division on the other hand deployed with leadership deficiencies to the extent that the division was destroyed during the battle of Schmidt and provides the Army a constant reminder of the value for effective tactical leadership.<sup>18</sup>

When the 28th Division moved into the area on 26 October, the men found themselves in a dark, dense forest of the type immortalized in old German folk tales. All about them they saw emergency rations containers, artillery-destroyed trees, loose mines along poor, muddy roads and trails, and shell and mine craters by the hundreds. The troops relieved by the 28th Division were tired, unshaven, dirty and nervous. They bore the telltale signs of a tough fight - signs that made a strong impression on the incoming soldiers and their commanders. After the operation, the 28th Division commander himself, General Cota, recalled that at the time he felt that the 28th's attack had only 'a gambler's chance' of succeeding.<sup>19</sup>

This battle was fought by a proud and brave regiment of infantry from Pennsylvania. Countless examples of valor were conducted by soldiers and junior leaders to succeed in their assigned task, however difficult.<sup>20</sup> These are the most damning of circumstances for failed leadership when the troops perform but the leaders don't. The circumstances under which the 28th Division fought the battle for Schmidt are not unlike those planned for NATO's Central Region where reserve component units are expected to arrive and take up the fight. Division, regimental, and battalion leaders and their staffs cannot afford to arrive to relearn the lessons of Schmidt: intelligence estimates underrated the enemy's intentions and willingness to fight; leaders relied on periodic reports to their command posts to develop the situation; subordinates failed to interpret orders correctly, errors arose from fear, negligence, and hastiness. This is the same

environment that Clausewitz envisioned at the turn of the century. This is an example of such poorly trained leadership that no amount of retraining could assure success.

The operational environment today suggests that the Army will not have the time for wholesale changes prior to combat nor will the force ratios support our success on the battlefield with a division failing under inadequate leadership. Wars are unlikely for the future where failings in leadership can be overcome by the nation's ability to out-resource the enemy. Recent studies indicate that training demands for conventional warfare leadership competency are greater than the tactical leadership of reserve component combat units can devote to such training within peacetime constraints. This shortfall must be overcome for these units to be viable contributors to an already resource constrained environment in order to execute the demands of AirLand Battle Doctrine. Are we headed for a disaster with our eyes wide open?

The most recent account of the impact of lethality on the conventional battlefield in a conventional threat environment are the operations of Battalion 77 of the Israeli Defense Forces during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War.<sup>21</sup> The significance of this battle is the impact of lethality on the leader at the tactical level of war. Then Colonel Kahalani mounted in a borrowed tank astride the division's most dangerous sector with his forces whittled from battalion size to no more than two platoons after ten days and nights of heavy fighting stopped the Syrian main attack on the Golan Heights.<sup>22</sup> The increased weapons lethality rates created the background news hourly of yet another fallen fellow battalion and brigade commander to Kahalani's left and right.<sup>23</sup> Meanwhile, he received impromptu orders to take command of individual tanks and crews from

other units then moving aimlessly about the battlefield. This engagement provided a chance for a properly trained leader to excel.

Kahalani, commanding one of ten remaining tanks after a fixed battle with Syrian tanks in night combat, conducted a counterattack to reoccupy the commanding terrain. He had no chance to talk to his forces composed of men he had never met.<sup>24</sup> He moved out to his front thereby exposing himself to Syrian fire in order to force friendly tank crews to follow him past the gates of defeat to victory. He operated in an environment where fallen leaders were replaced by subordinates and others and units still remained effective.<sup>25</sup> These types of subordinates are the leaders we must effectively groom now, because, unlike other wars where few could overcome the failure of many, today a few can imperil many. Can we continue to afford having the best talent of the Army focused in developing two skills, to serve as a specialist and warfighter for a come-as-you-are war?

This added dimension to the challenge of raising the leadership in the necessary numbers and having them immediately available to respond to the call to arms is the central issue that determines the kind of warfighter the Army needs. Clausewitz would respond from the corridor of Root Hall that the warfighter must possess the requisite intellect and courage to find truth amidst falsehood and possess the moral convictions to follow his seasoned instincts wherever they may lead.<sup>26</sup> Clausewitz may well have identified the two essentials, but that at each level of war there are needs for different warfighter skills based on the environment that the warfighter operates in.

At the tactical level of war from platoon through division, the Army is steeped in the tradition of success with the "Warrior Leader." His trappings

are tactical and technical proficiency. His operational environment is a constant struggle to reduce the fog of battle and sustain individual and organizational courage in the face of death and failure. He is a warrior because at times he alone must go on point to scent out the truth and allow for the safety of his men. His tools are like any craftsman--always available on instinct; always a quiver filled with skills honed to the competency of a master. He is conditioned with the physical and mental toughness of a prize fighter to endure the stress and fatigue of battle and blows of disaster with the stamina to remain patient for opportunity; patient to deliver the skillful blow in the fifteenth round when opportunity knocks for the first time.

For the platoon leader, Jim McDonough reported his needs from an experience in one of the most dangerous operational areas in Vietnam in 1972, the coastal regions of the Bong Song plain.<sup>27</sup> His platoon was sequestered away from its parent company and was assigned the mission of securing the village of Truong Lam which in turn was supposed to serve as a model success of the Thieu government in Saigon.<sup>28</sup> Daily this lieutenant, without guidance from above, sent patrols to the outlying areas to fix and destroy the Viet Cong in one of the most fiercely contested areas in the region. As each patrol departed, all knew that the odds were against contact being made by conventional means. Those were not the tactics of the Viet Cong. The enemy knew well the advantages of psychological warfare when he laced the countryside with mines and booby traps and employed the tactics of hit and run ambushes. Daily, Jim McDonough sent the mutilated bodies of wounded and dead fellow countrymen on medivac helicopters.

Platoon leader McDonough was asked to bear witness with his men one night to the attack by the Viet Cong on the village Truong Lam which McDonough's



platoon was responsible for protecting.<sup>29</sup> That night the frustration of the Viet Cong over previous failures to destroy McDonough's platoon was vented with the outright murder of old men, women, and children.<sup>30</sup> Leadership in an undeclared war means the ability and courage to influence men and sustain their will to fight while their fellow countrymen back home sought to abandon them. This is the effort he was ordered to support. It was leadership in an environment where his company commander was rarely seen and then only in the security of his command post; leadership where the battalion and brigade commanders' presence was only felt by an occasional visit after a successful fight.<sup>31</sup> It was a war where rarely the battalion or brigade commander went on point and normally remained in the safety of his command post or helicopter until the elite Viet Cong sappers attacked the enclave or hurled mortars and rockets at it. Those battalion and brigade commanders that ventured out to where the fight was waged were soon scolded by their superiors for senseless bravery. This situation whereby the senior leadership of combat formations remained fixed to their command posts to plan and prosecute the war simply repeated the error of World War II with the performance of the command groups at battalion and regimental level during the Battle of Schmidt which singularly led to the 28th Division's piecemeal defeat. The "lesson learned" apparently was quickly forgotten.

At the operational level of war, from corps to theater the army has produced the ethic of the "Great Captains." The environment and nature of war is different from the challenges of our "Warrior Leader" at the tactical level. He might liken himself as the conductor of a large symphony orchestra, a master composer of art able to blend harmonic sounds or direct bold overtures. He is competent in directing and composing. Campaign plans marshalling unilateral

joint efforts and coalition warfare are second nature. Directives couched in political objectives as well as military terms are sometimes vague and complex. He is more wise from experience than brilliant from intellect. But he is the master of the environment no matter how convoluted. His uncertainty is filled with anticipation and frustration. On good days, he may be able to shift the focus of the command only one degree in azimuth. Humility and patience are learned virtues. He never has enough resources and always an Achilles Heel that he hopes no one else knows about but he never forgets. He must possess the faith and trust in subordinates to carry the burden of executing his will passed the hurdle of defeat to victory as absolutes. Lastly, and more importantly, victory is relative and always carries the compassion for the loss of our nation's youth in contrast to the political settlement.

At the strategic level, the "Soldier Statesman" directs the effort by focusing "the means" to the strategic center of gravity.<sup>32</sup> This soldier is filled with sage wisdom from warfighter's experience. He can determine the needed force requirements with a vision to support national security and he is a statesman who must marshal national support. He becomes the great provider to the warfighters by fielding and sustaining the force. Policy development with issues couched in subtle terms are the norm. Soliciting interagency support in a government founded on pluralism is required. Resources matched to priorities and risk-taking are always calculated, debated and reevaluated to reduce where possible the strategy-force mismatch or simply stated the "war stoppers." The process for change is evolutionary vice revolutionary. Issues are always complex with advice and counsel in varied solutions. He is no longer a commander but all the more "The Leader."

Many names are called to mind as super strategists, leaders, and warriors who fulfilled the nation's requirements for Great Captains and Soldier Statesmen. The myth is that these few people who provided the invaluable service to nation while serving in key positions succeeded only on their individual merits. Yet, each in his own way was ushered, supported, influenced, inspired and even directed by a supporting cast of juniors, peers and seniors. Within each of these supporting casts there were the master craftsmen who served in the same tradition of pilots serving their captains who sailed vessels in uncharted waters on skill and intellect in the same Clausewitzian tradition of the nineteenth century. These pilots aboard ship were leaders because of their competence and skill. Ships were commanded by sage captains but never set sail without "The Pilot." This concept of pilots or master craftsmen specialized with the experience and expertise is the principal reason why the Army of the twentieth century has adopted the philosophy of developing professionals to serve the Warrior Leaders, Great Captains and Soldier Statesmen, which are commonly known within the ranks of the Army as the generalists.

By inference, one would argue at this point that warfighter is synonymous with infantryman, cavalryman, or artillerist. A warfighter is a leader, or a staff officer, who is required routinely to deliver individual arms or combined arms effects in coordinated effort during a specific phase of a campaign plan, or at a specified moment of truth in a battle. Therefore he may be an intelligence officer marshalling the integrated collection plan for intelligence preparation of the battlefield or a cavalryman fighting a covering force battle in the Corps campaign plan. Traditional views would suggest that this small clique of warfighters only includes members of the combat arms. Logistics officers are

as much warfighters as the infantryman on point, for they marshal the means to the battlefield.

Therefore, the pilots of today's army are the individuals dedicated to translating raw national resources into available military capability. These pilots are the specialists trained in engineering, law, medicine, automated data processing, accounting, operations research, advertising, marketing, research and development, and political science to name a few.

The dilemma for the Army is that the needs for the many warfighters at the tactical level of war far exceed the need for the few at the operational and strategic levels of war. In general, the current officer professional development program would indicate that the Army focuses the officer to be both a warfighter and pilot, so that his utility will continue in peace and war as he progresses in rank and position.

There is no question on the program today for identifying and grooming the "Pilots." They are branch qualified and capable to lead successfully at the lowest tactical levels. Their academic backgrounds demonstrate an intellectual gift for advanced degrees in needed specialties that are developed at the finest educational institutions of our nation. Separated from service for two years to be uninterrupted with the distractions of daily service routine. Today's pilots are assigned with care to develop their needed expertise in the field and at the highest levels of their disciplines. These pilots are critical to an Army's ability to wage war. This same tradition of specialists served the north during the American Civil War by marshalling strategic resources of railroads and industrial might. Northern pilots served their nation by serving their warfighters, who were successfully able to wage war. There is a great tradition of

pilots in the Army to serve the Great Captains when the nation is at war and nation building when at peace. The concern is that the program for warfighters is not as readily discernible and may appear as a minimum to be left to chance.

Warfighters are groomed in general through a combination of field experience and military schooling focused on advancing their skills to operate effectively at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels of war. Because most warfighters must be groomed with the skills of a pilot competing demands exist for their energies. Therefore, warfighters are assigned to ever-increasing staffing responsibilities and advanced schooling for pilot's skills as they develop minimal warfighting experience and schooling. Furthermore, the Army's needs to develop management and staffing skills have increased the need for proportionate branch and specialty representation at its advanced military schools. This requirement has driven the curriculum to tend to the needs of pilots for mid-level and senior service schools. Pilots and warfighters experience the same leadership opportunities through battalion level, even though battalion command is not "required" of a pilot to advance to the highest levels of his discipline. Most pilots today have commanded battalions. Pilots and warfighters attend the same military schools with the pilots' needs extended to advanced civil schooling. Finally, the centerpiece of the Warfighter's program is that the Army relies on the individual to maintain his expertise on his own initiative and quick refresher training prior to reentering the warfighter ranks. These are the reasons that our program for warfighters may not be as well thought out as the energies and success focused on the program for pilots.

One alternative strategy for the Army's long-term officer professional development program is to create fundamentally two programs: one for pilots and the other for warfighters. Each officer would only focus his energies into one of the two career tracts. The implications are that the current system would need to be dramatically altered. The focus of this strategy is to raise the competency of Pilots and Warfighters with increased focus on assignments, education, and training programs. One obvious spin-off is that our military schools would once again receive the priority of talent needed to educate the officer corps. Proponents for creating a General Staff Branch argue that no longer can we afford to have officers trained and educated as both Pilot and Warfighter.

A second alternative strategy is to continue with the current officer professional development program architecture but focus entirely the Army's warfighting educational institutions to raise warfighters for the tactical, operational, and strategic levels of war. Core curriculums focused on warfighting imperatives with electives focused on Pilots skills. Warfighting imperatives would include developing the individual's ability to operate full cycle from developing alternative and competing strategies through planning and execution of contingency plans. Core curriculums should be founded on historical analysis of seminal works and examples as Jomini prescribed in his effort to produce the generalists who are needed to take their place after the few great masters. Warplanning and warfighting skills should be honed by realistic and repetitive computer simulations. Graduate degrees in pursuit of warfighting excellence should be a requirement and not an option. In line with this warfighter's program service schools should be required to produce annually written comprehensive examinations to the officers of each branch focused on certifying warfighting competency of all officers through the rank of Colonel.

One question that the Army may be asking itself periodically, as it did during this recent survey of the officer corps, is whether "The Pilots" have now become the ship's captains at peace and displaced the opportunity to develop the Warrior Leaders, Great Captains and Soldier Statesmen. The operational environments of these generalists in time of war is so plagued with uncertainty and warfare is so serious and so deadly that the Army must rely on having the ranks filled with only the sage experience they can provide. Generalists groomed with experience who yet retain the virtue of an amateur's zeal in uncharted lands where "The Pilots" offer counsel from the narrower perspective of a navigator are necessary throughout the Army.

The operational environment today, and for the foreseeable future, is not only uncertain but no longer has the margin of error of yesteryear for the next generation of Warrior Leaders, Great Captains and Soldier Statesmen. The lethality of the battlefield of the 1990's and the 21st century will not automatically provide the advantage to an industrialized nation that simply outproduces its opponent.

Our combat-seasoned leadership was reminded of this operational requirement in 1973 when the Arab-Israeli war concluded. The lessons of our World War II veteran leadership from the Ardennes, Bastogne, and Normandy were well learned by a nation which the United States Army played a major role in equipping and training.<sup>33</sup> As a result of the 1973 War, our leaders knew well that the United States Army was as ill equipped and prepared as the nation to fight and win conventionally against a threat whether in Europe, the Middle East, North Africa, Korea, or Central and South America. The handicap the next generation faces is that there will likely be only one conflict in a conventional threat environment. The next generation's margin of error will be nonexistent in comparison

to that offered their forefathers in the profession of arms because of the increased conventional technologies. No longer can our Army absorb the failures of inadequate leadership. No longer can the nation survive with its liberties intact with a militia of volunteers who only assemble in times of crisis as our founding fathers had originally intended.

The issue that the survey of the officer corps has raised is not one of having selected the wrong men and women, nor is it that the "pilots" are now captains of the ships at peace. The issue is that the warfighters are bogged down with the duties of pilots and not focusing adequate energies to a principal function in peacetime for any army and that is to prepare for war.

The indicators are the diversion from purpose in times of peace. When operational and strategic headquarters focus efforts at justifying key programs vital to roles and missions at the expense of mature, innovative and current war plans and contingency strategies. Senior officials quip that after reviewing the curricula at the Army's educational institutions there is much emphasis on matters other than warfighting. Senior leaders who have dual community and tactical responsibilities openly state they must focus the majority of their energies on housekeeping functions of community because that is where fewer quality people exist. When the last time the tactical leadership of a division has walked the ground of its assigned warplans was so long ago that the commander's vision is all but a haze. Or when a division required to execute an emergency deployment readiness exercise and chooses as a matter of general policy to ignore the intent of the directive. These are not the concerns of naysayers, or members of the reform caucus with illusions of a renaissance man. These are the telltale signs of the constant battle between competing challenges.



None of these conditions exist because we want them to exist. They exist because the leadership and institutions have been diverted to resolve the dilemma of competing challenges. These competing challenges have in most cases forced the educational institutions to accommodate these pressures. Unfortunately, the price we pay is in readiness. Without the leadership involved and committed to purpose is the loss of benefit from his experience, his wisdom, his counsel, and his support to the benefit of warfighters and units, and national security.

There is clear evidence that the Army knows what the requirements are for effective warfighters and pilots at all levels. It is equally clear that the Army is placing these talented men and women correctly. Where the shortfall exists for reasons well known is that warfighters and units are oftentimes diverted from the Army's principal purpose while the nation is at peace: to prepare for war.

## Endnotes

1. Welter Millis, Arms and Men (New Brunswick: Rutgers University, 1981), p. 304.

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